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Shocking results - AOL online privacy report

Nearly all of us giving away crucial information

by Katie Scott published on 11 August 2008

80% of Brits claim that they wouldn't give away their income details online, but, says AOL, nearly of us have or will.

The results are now out for an AOL study, which involved a nationwide survey of 1000 online consumers.

It found that while internet users claim to be very conscious about their privacy and guarded about their personal details, we are all giving away details without realising.

The survey found that 84% of respondents said they would not give away income details online, however, 89% actually willingly did - without any pressure or persuasion.

The findings also showed the expectation of privacy problems involving fraud is greater than the incidence of actual problems with 34% expecting credit card fraud, while only 11% having experienced it.

"Our research identified a significant gap between what people say and what they do when it comes to protecting sensitive information online," said Jules Polonetsky, AOL's chief privacy officer.

AOL has now launched a campaign to educate the public about online privacy.

Information commissioner Richard Thomas added that online companies also need to play a part in educating their customers.

"If organisations fail to meet their data protection obligations they not only risk enforcement action by the ICO, they also risk losing the trust of their customers.



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"However, it is equally important for individuals to be aware of their information rights and to take steps to protect their own privacy."